Member specially requested that the land records maintenance officers might be instructed to measure out and define the limits of the roads, lanes and tanks of the Municipality.

It was his impression that many of those lanes could easily be widened and made cartable without the acquisition of adjoining lands. Speaking of the roads he also complained that Attingal was a snake-infested locality and suggested that the danger could be greatly minimised by removing the hedgerows and shrubbery on either side of the roads. He requested that the D. P. W. might be instructed to do the needful in that direction also.

In conclusion, he requested that the Government might be pleased to place all the *porambokes* in the town at the disposal of the Council, as those areas which were now serving no useful purpose would, if handed over to the Council, prove to be a source of permanent income to the Council.

Dewan's reply.—The condition of the sides of the roads in your town will engage the attention of the Chief Engineer.

In regard to encroachments, I am led to think, from what you say, that your town is full of encroachments. There is an Assistant Tahsildar for the Chirayinkil taluk who has his head-quarters at Attingal. I inspected some of his land records work in the back-waters at Chirayinkil. If you had told me about the encroachments within the town when I was at Attingal last, I could have seen some of them myself. However, I will ask the Land Revenue Commissioner to instruct the Assistant Tahsildar to inspect these encroachments and take prompt action.

93. Wants of the town of Shencottah.

Mr. K. Sankaranarayana Aiyer B. A. (Member, Municipal Council, Shencottah) began by referring to G. O. No. 372/L. R., dated the 31st July, 1918, under which the resurvey of the town was allowed to lie over and also to the various inconveniences experienced by the Municipal Council for want of a correct survey of the town. He requested that orders might be issued for the work being taken up early next year as the cost would not exceed Rs. 2,000.

The Member drew the attention of the Government to the existence of a duplicate system of standard dry measure at Shencottah under the Weights and Measures Regulation, *viz.*, the *para*, *edangali*, and its subdivisions, side by side with the Madras *padi* and its subdivisions, and the consequent inconvenience to the public. He suggested two remedies, *viz.*, either the adoption of the Madras *padi* and *marakal* as the standard dry measure in Shencottah as advocated by Mr. S. Subramhanya Karayalar at the last session of the Assembly, or the retention of the old *marakal*, *padi*, etc., and its subdivisions as in Nanjanad, their values according to the recognised standard measure being impressed on them.

He next spoke about the local Village Panchayat court. He admitted that people had nothing to complain about the institution of that court but only in respect of its constitution. As it was constituted at present on a communal basis, the court was only a source of trouble and inconvenience to the people, and consequently he was of the opinion that, if proper men were not available for doing honorary work, Government would do well to abolish the institution altogether. At present the court was composed of two Vakils, a contractor and two medical practitioners. He also mentioned that there was no necessity for a Village Panchayat court after the establishment of a separate Munsiff's court at Shencottah. He then objected to the practice of levying institution fees in the Village Panchayat court as being opposed to the clear provision of law on the subject. Another illegality to which the Member referred related to the imposition of a court fee stamp of half a rupee on applications for the execution of decrees presented before that court. He observed that, if Government insisted on the continuance of the court, some remedy had to be found for obviating the necessity for the frequent adjournments of its sittings for want of a quorum. He suggested that either the quorum might be reduced to two or the present strength be increased by the addition of one or two more judges. In conclusion, the Member referred to the order of the Government of Madras, Law, General Department, 90-174 dated

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the 25th January, 1922, which sanctioned the remission of institution fees in the Village Panchayat courts of the Madras Presidency and prayed that a similar course might be adopted in Travancore also.

Dewan's reply.—As regards the survey of the town, I was not aware that, in 1918, Government promised to undertake a resurvey of the town. I shall examine that correspondence. But I very much doubt if a resurvey of the town, which must at least be four square miles in extent could be done at a cost of Rs. 2,000. I do not know what sort of survey is meant. If you want a cadastral survey of the town, which alone will be really useful, it would cost over Rs. 30,000 per square mile.

Perhaps what you mean is only a street survey under which the streets alone need be demarcated, and it is unnecessary to measure and survey private properties. A street survey would be very imperfect as it would leave out all other public places than streets, *e. g.*, tanks, rivers, markets, etc.

Member.—The minor circuit there is found to be very incorrect.

Dewan.—If the minor circuit is incorrect, it means that the frame-work is incorrect, which could be set right only by a resurvey. A resurvey is very costly.

In regard to the standard measure, I think you are right in complaining that your taluk has received a different treatment from that accorded to Nanjanad. Government will consider the matter and see whether the *padi* and the *marakal* could be recognised as the standard measures for Shencottah, as in the case of Nanjanad.

In regard to the local Village Panchayat court, you have criticised its present constitution. You have also said that it is very difficult to get the prescribed quorum of three judges. In regard to the constitution of the court, I will not say anything. It is a delicate matter. You refer to two judges who are Vakils, another who is a contractor and two others who are private medical practitioners. Panchayat Court judges also should follow some profession or other. Whichever judge you select, he may have his own profession. I am sure the present judges find time for discharging their work as judges in spite of their professional work, as otherwise they would have tendered their resignation by this time.

In regard to the reduction of the quorum to two, the High Court does not approve of that proposal.

Member.—As the rules now stand, the two judges present cannot receive compromise petitions and pass orders thereon or even admit ordinary petitions. This is very inconvenient to the parties.

Dewan.—The only alternative is to increase the strength of the court.

Member.—If from five judges a quorum cannot be obtained, I do not think matters will improve with 6 or 7 judges. As there is a Munsiff's court at Shencottah, there is no necessity to have a Village Panchayat court also there. The Panchayat court may well be abolished. We are not in any way benefited by that court.

Dewan.—The abolition of a popular institution like that would not be justifiable. I am not sure that the Municipal Council has authorised you to make that statement. The High Court is against an increase in the strength of the court, as also the reduction of the quorum. Anyhow, I have no objection to refer the matter to the High Court once again.

With regard to institution fees the High Court say that there is no case for remitting them.

Member.—The law explicitly says that the institution fee should not exceed 5 per cent. of the value of the suit. This rule is disregarded in practice.

Dewan.—The law must certainly be followed. There is a specific provision in the Regulation to the effect that the institution fee should not exceed 5 per cent. of the value of the suit.

Member.—We are now asked to affix court fee stamps. I think it would be better if we were asked to pay the fee in cash.

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Dewan.—Is that your objection? Is it not very much better to pay the fee in court fee stamps instead of in money and thus avoid room for peculation?

Member.—Irrespective of the amount, the Panchayat court actually levies fees at more than 5 per cent. of the value of the suit prescribed by the rules.

Dewan.—If so, it must be in ignorance of the Regulation. I shall draw the attention of the High Court to this.

Member.—The Madras Government have abolished institution fees altogether.

Dewan.—Conditions here and in British India are not similar. In regard to court fees, if a fee of eight annas is insisted on per execution petition, it is against the provision of the law and it must be discontinued. I shall draw the attention of the High Court to this also.

94. Needs of the town of Kayankulam.

Mr. K. Gopala Panikkar. (Member, Municipal Council, Kayankulam) began by saying that, though the necessity for the shifting of the Munsiff's court at Krishnapuram to Kayankulam had been represented at several previous sessions of the Assembly, that request seemed to have been persistently refused by Government on the plea that the High Court was not in favour of such a proposal. In support of his representation the Member stated that Kayankulam was not only the centre of the several *pakuthies* over which the jurisdiction of the court extended, but also an important commercial centre, superior in every way to Krishnapuram—an inaccessible, unhealthy and out-of-the-way place. It was also stated that the Member understood that the rented building in which the Munsiff's court was held at Krishnapuram had been condemned by the present Chief Justice as incommodious and ill-ventilated. The removal of the Munsiff's court to Kayankulam where all the local offices were held would afford more convenience to the litigant and the general public. The Member requested that, alike in the interests of the Municipality and the litigant public, the court might be shifted from Krishnapuram to Kayankulam as early as practicable.

He then spoke about the necessity of free supply of vaccine to Municipalities. It was stated that the benefits of vaccination were enjoyed by the inhabitants outside municipal limits without any additional burden of taxation, while the inhabitants within municipal limits had to pay for the same by way of municipal tax, because the Municipality had to pay for the supply of vaccine. He complained of the invidious distinction shown as between residents within municipal limits and those outside in the matter of sanitary relief. In view of the fact that Government entirely stopped the grant to the Municipality and that the money spent in purchasing vaccine might be utilised for other legitimate purposes, he submitted that the Municipality might be supplied with vaccine free of cost.

The Member next dwelt upon the necessity for a *satrom* within the municipal limits and for a leper asylum outside the town. He said that the Government had sanctioned the construction of a Leper Asylum at Padanayarkulangara in 1910, which, however, was subsequently dropped for reasons known only to Government. Innumerable lepers sought shelter at the Ochira temple to the annoyance and inconvenience of the general public. The Member prayed for the opening of a leper asylum either at Kayankulam or at any place near it. In regard to the *satrom* the Member represented that Kayankulam formerly had a *satrom*, now used as the local Sub-Registrar's office. The growing importance of the town called for the opening of a public *satrom*, and he prayed that, in the interests of passengers and the prestige of the town, that institution might be established at once.

Lastly, the Member pointed out the necessity for the construction of a bridge in the place of the old Alappurattu bridge. Out of the three bridges now existing in the town only two were cartable, the Kariyakkar bridge being thoroughly useless. All the carts and other vehicles plying to Eruvayil, Kirikkad and Pattiyur had to pass through the main bazaar road. The heavy traffic on the main bazaar road caused serious hardship to the public and with a view to remove that inconvenience the Member requested that the construction of a bridge at the site where the old Alappurattu bridge existed might be sanctioned.

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